



# EXPOSURE TO A FLU-LIKE ILLNESS

NOVEMBER 2009

FACILITIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION (FASD)

## OVERVIEW

Exposure to a flu-like illness has become a growing concern as the flu season progresses and the threat of the 2009 H1N1 flu continues. The objective of this flyer, consistent with direction from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), is to provide supervisors and employees at NASA Headquarters with general guidance on what to do if exposed to a flu-like illness or the 2009 H1N1 flu. This flyer provides a baseline for all employees and supervisors to operate from. Please note, as the situation continues to develop further guidance is expected from both the CDC and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

**If I have a family member at home who is sick with a flu-like illness or the 2009 H1N1 flu, should I go to work?**

Employees who are well, but who have an ill family member at home with an flu-like illness or the 2009 H1N1 flu can go to work as usual. These employees should monitor their health every day, and take everyday precautions including washing their hands often with soap and water, especially after they cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.

If workers become ill, they should notify their supervisor and stay home. Employees who have an underlying medical condition or who are pregnant should call their health care provider for advice, because they might need to receive influenza antiviral drugs to prevent illness.

**What is the incubation period of the 2009 H1N1 (swine) flu? How long will it take to get the flu after being exposed?**

The estimated incubation period is unknown and could range from 1 to 7 days, and more likely 1 to 4 days.

**How long can an infected person spread H1N1 (swine) flu to others?**

People with a flu-like illness or the 2009 H1N1 flu virus should be considered potentially contagious as long as they have flu symptoms and possibly for up to 7 days following the start of illness. Children, especially younger children, might potentially be contagious for longer periods.

**What is the best way to keep from spreading the virus through coughing or sneezing?**

If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.) Keep away from others as much as possible. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Put your used tissue in the waste basket. Then, clean your hands, and do so every time you cough or sneeze.

## MESSAGE FOR SUPERVISORS

It is the goal of NASA Headquarters to provide timely information to all employees, and to provide resources to continue to support our supervisors during this ongoing pandemic situation.

The guidance provided in this flyer is not all encompassing. Some decisions will be made on a situational basis. The points of contact provided below will provide you with further direction on specific situations as appropriate.

Specific guidance for supervisors can be found on the NASA HQ Pandemic Preparedness Website. Please visit the website for guidance and situational updates at [www.hq.nasa.gov/flu](http://www.hq.nasa.gov/flu).

## POINTS OF CONTACT

If you have a medical question concerning the 2009 H1N1 flu or the seasonal flu, please feel free to contact Dr. Patrick Crarey at the **NASA Headquarters Health Unit**.

patrick.crarey-1@nasa.gov  
202-358-2600

If you have a question about leave or telework options, please contact Rhonda Taylor the Program Manager for the **NASA Headquarters Telework Program**.

rhonda.l.taylor@nasa.gov  
202-358-0444

If you have questions about the Pandemic Influenza Plan or procedures, please contact Jolene Meidinger the lead Emergency Preparedness Officer for the **NASA Headquarters Pandemic Preparedness Initiative**.

jolene.meidinger@nasa.gov  
202-358-3880